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TWO ARTICLES OF A BOY'S EQUIPMENT¹

OPINIONS AND PRINCIPLES

A certain ^{little} young 'Arthur' ^{was lately} ~~has been~~ amusing, perhaps boring, us in the pages of Punch for a good many weeks. 'Arthur', aged 12, asks questions, persistent, tiresome questions, punctuated with 'why' and 'you said'; and the poor dear people whom he corners squirm uneasily ~~under these operations~~. They are nice people, too, with ~~great~~ notions about bringing the boy up well, - this father, uncle, ⁶ elder sister, and governess; but the text ~~book~~ upon which he examines them all is their own ~~various~~ sayings and doings, and the poor things come out badly. Two obvious reflections suggest themselves - that Arthur ^{is} ~~was~~ an abominable little prig and deserves to be snubbed, and that his people are poor things, the boy being in a bad way who depends upon them for his bringing up. Now Arthur is not really a prig; the trouble is that he says out loud, like a Maria Edgeworth-Child, what children usually keep to themselves; & his people, who show up so badly, are good-natured, well-meaning, and as intelligent as the rest of us. The obvious conclusions we have drawn are at fault; but all the same these Punch papers are a contribution to ^{our thought about} ~~the art of~~ education. Two

13p2 em 213A

"J'ai servi, commandé, vaincu quarante années;
Du monde, entre mes mains, j'ai vu les destinées;
Et j'ai toujours connu qu'en chaque événement
Le destin des états dépendait d'un moment".

Indeed it behoved the man who revived the rôle of the Caesars to study his part; ~~the~~ man, whose success ~~was~~ depend^{ed} on the generous enthusiasm of his following, learned from ~~the~~ ^{earlier} records of the ~~past~~ ^{may become} how generous, devoted, single in purpose, a mixed mass of men ~~could be~~. Literature and history ^{taught} brought him these things, and he knew how to apply his knowledge with a definiteness and exactness ^{less than} ~~which was more~~ generous. We have few finer examples of the tremendous practical power of a liberal education; nor do we often come across a more exact indication of ~~the limits of such an edu-~~ ^{its} ~~cation.~~ ^{ations.} His opinions were nearly always just; thus, explaining his reasons for restoring Divine worship in France, he mentions how he had been moved by hearing the bells of a village church, and adds that, ~~if~~ such an incident moved him, certainly it must affect the people - because religion is natural to all men. Again, of Louis XVI, - "Nay, nay, he was no tyrant; had he been one I should this day have been a captain of Engineers".

is vital to him, so the intellectual energies must be stimulated to extract what the individual needs, by a generous supply and ^{by} a way of presentation that is by no means obvious. We have the highest authority for the indirect method of teaching ^{which is} pursued in literature and poetry. The parables of our Lord contain the fullest digest of the Christian religion; - even to-day we understand only a little, here and there, and we wonder how much could have been obvious to the Jews who heard these ^{Simple-Sounding Tales} ~~teachings~~ in the first place. We do not understand, but we know. The parables are part and parcel of our lives as perhaps no other part of the Bible has become.

The boy who gets a single idea, notion, material for an opinion, out of a big book has his reward. ^{But, in order to get this reward,} ~~he~~ must read for himself and ^{must} read to know. His teacher's main business is to see that he knows; ^{the} all acts of generalisation, comparison, judgement, etc, the mind performs for itself in the act of knowing. But knowledge got from books should be got for the sake of knowledge itself and not to pass examinations; ^{Such success} ~~to pass these~~ is good and well, and easy enough to the boy or girl who knows: only 'passing' should

not be put in the ~~very~~ foreground as a motive to study. ^{If the mind} be pre-occupied by any secondary motive, ^{that intellectual growth of the truly intelligent} ~~that intellectual growth~~ is retarded, does not take place.

Opinions are not to be entertained in a casual

is playing and is capable of imposing his faith upon the world.
Probably there never was a life on which the humanities exercised
a more powerful influence; ^{never} has there been such an example of
of the power of the informed mind to conquer the world, Napoleon
is a final answer to the contention that a knowledge of books has
no practical value. There was, ^{perhaps,} ~~no~~ no incidents ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ his career
that was not suggested, inspired, illustrated, by some historical
precedent, some literary aphorism. [¶] We see, to day, on a very different
field, how books can make a nation. The Danes, after we had seized
their battle ships by way of clipping the claws of ^u ~~N~~aparte,
set to work to make themselves what they are to day -- the first
farmers in Europe; and this they have done in and through their
schools where they get, not technical instruction, but a pretty
^{course of} wide reading in history and literature. It is for this ^{that} ~~their~~
Continuation Schools exist, and, as in the case of Napoleon, this
sort of investment of time and labour has brought about extra-
ordinary results. [¶] It has seemed to me worth while to dwell on the
career of ^u ~~N~~aparte because, if he illustrates the necessity for
liberal, persistent, reading as a preparation for life, he shows
just as forcibly that the boy who goes out with ample material for
the formation of opinions, is only prepared for life on one side

as it were. He has ^{the} knowledge which ^his power, but he wants the wisdom which is conduct. Napoleon was as unmoral as an intelligent, undisciplined boy who has had the run of a library but has not been taught to order himself. Well has it been said of him:-

"An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,

But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,

However deeply in men's spirits skilled,

Look through thine own".

A freebooter among the nations, shrinking from no excesses of rapine and slaughter, without pity, without mercy, without ^{integrity} ~~integrity~~, taking refuge in lies at ~~every~~ moral crisis of his life, petty, mean and vulgar when little things crossed him, he stands before us an ~~example~~ example on a gigantic scale of the perils of an education which is merely practical. But, we ^{may} ask, what has all this to do with us? We paint on a smaller canvas and run no such risks.

In so far as we encourage our children to believe that success is the chief thing, ('la gloire', let us call it), our foundations are on the same plan, however small may be our scale. Our children cannot do better than emulate Buonaparte in his wide

Will you allow me to take this opportunity of offering my warmest and most friendly congratulations to the Birmingham Branch of the P.N.E.U. on the occasion of this Annual Conference? I know well (though less well than does our indefatigable Hon.Org.Sec.) all the energy, zeal & interest that go to the getting up of such a Conference and I appreciate the result all the more because, perhaps twenty years ago, I tried in vain to form a Branch in this city. May the Branch Flourish, and be invigorated by the great efforts which your Conference Committee have made on this occasion.

Everyone knows the truth of all that I have

12p 7cme313A

advanced, and yet we go on in a casual way, chiefly because this kind of programme seems so vast and indefinite that we do not know how to attack it, and we leave our children at the mercy of every wind that blows for a chance wafture of opinion, and prin-